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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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USDA NATIONAL SURVEY REPORT — ON HOME GARDENING

Home gardeners -- why do they spend long hours tilling their soil...and what do they do with the "fruits of their labor"?

Home gardening was one of eight areas of information included in a recent USDA National survey with 1,417 persons (who were the main food shoppers in their households). The survey revealed if and why these households had home gardens, what fruits and vegetables were most popular and how they used their home-grown products. The results of the survey are used in coping with the demands of consumers.

The reasons mentioned most for having a home garden (in 1975) were based on the taste preference toward garden fresh fruits and vegetables, a desire to save money, and then the enjoyment of gardening as a hobby. Home gardens planted to save money were more likely in households with five or more members.

In single member households, however, about half of those with gardens said they had a garden "as a hobby". There was a slight increase during the last three years in the number of home gardens..which may be attributed in part to the rising food prices of this period. In 1976, 48 percent of the households either already had, or planned to have, a fruit and vegetable garden. More than 80 percent of the 1975 gardens were located in the household yard.

...on vegetables

The tomato was the most popular vegetable grown in home gardens (1975)...about 95

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Home Gardening (con't)

percent of the garden households grew them. Next favorites were beans, including limas, green, wax, pole, etc...then, cucumbers, peppers, radishes, and green onions -- and continuing in descending order, lettuce, onions, corn and carrots.

.....on fruits

Not many fruits were grown in the 1975 home gardens, according to the survey. Most popular items were strawberries and apples; then, melons, peaches and pears. Strawberries are more popular in the West than in other regions.

.....on freezing

Under half of the households surveyed (46 percent) froze fruits or vegetables in 1975 whether or not they came from their home gardens or even had a household garden. Freezing was most prevalent in rural communities. Beans and corn were the vegetables most often frozen from the home garden.

.....on canning

About 30 percent of the respondents said someone in their household canned or preserved fruits or vegetables from the household gardens in '75. The two most popular vegetables canned from these gardens were also the two most popular vegetables grown--tomatoes and beans. Cucumbers and beets were next in canning popularity. Of the home grown fruits, apples were canned most frequently, followed by strawberries, pears, and peaches.

More than twice as many of our home garden households (compared to the nongarden households) also were home owners. More of the households having gardens had three or more members than the nongarden households.

According to the survey, 13 percent of the respondents indicated that they were buying less fresh fruits and vegetables now compared to January 1975 because of higher food prices.

These figures were obtained from a National Study of Consumers' Food-Related Behavior, Attitudes and Motives, conducted by USDA, Spring 1976 and reported by Evelyn Kaitz and Jon P. Weimer, Social Science Analysts in the Economic Research Service, USDA.

●ING ABROAD? WATCH THOSE SOUVENIRS!

English woolens, Dutch flower bulbs, Canadian meat...what do these have in common?

They are all foreign agricultural products that are permitted into the United States. However, many are not permitted, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) wants you to know this. They don't want you spending money on souvenirs you might lose on returning to this country from abroad.

Some foreign agricultural items are prohibited by Federal quarantines because they can carry destructive plant or animal insects and diseases. For this reason, passenger baggage is inspected at all U.S. ports of arrival, and pest-risk items are confiscated and destroyed by inspectors

● USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Recently, at the Mexican border, an inspector stopped a woman carrying eggs. She said her small son was on a vegetarian diet and these were special "vegetarian eggs." When assured that she could find the same kind in her local grocery, she willingly gave them up. Eggs are banned because they can carry exotic Newcastle disease, fatal to chickens and other birds.

Last year, an APHIS inspector at Harlingen, Texas, was routinely checking the luggage of a returning American tourist. One suitcase contained over 900 citrus leaves intended for making tea. Normally, this is a harmless hobby, but in this instance, more than 20 of the leaves were infested with citrus blackfly, highly destructive to citrus plants.

What is permitted? APHIS' booklet, "Travelers' Tips," has this information. Send for a free copy by writing to: Travelers' Tips, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.



STATE POULTRY SPECIALIST
DEMONSTRATING DUSTING HEN

PHOTO # BN 39060

CLOTHING EFFICIENCY WORK --
FITTING A GARMENT,

PHOTO # BN 38969



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